

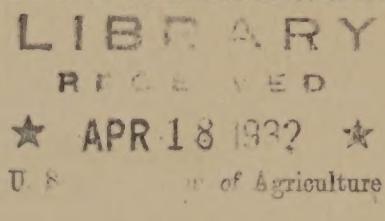
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MEETING - PROGRESSIVE GARDEN CLUB



A radio discussion by members of the Progressive Garden Club, W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, presiding, delivered through WRC and 46 other radio stations, associated with the National Broadcasting Company, Tuesday, March 29, 1932.

ANNOUNCER:

This is the final Tuesday of the month, and the members of the Progressive Garden Club are on hand for their regular once-a-month meeting on the air. Today, they have Mr. George F. Waldo of the Fruit Production Section of the Department of Agriculture, meeting with them, and their subject for discussion is Growing Small Fruits for Home Use. Just a moment and we will join them.

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CHAIRMAN:

Hello folks, glad to have so many of you at our meeting today, especially at this time of the year when we're all getting so busy on our farms, and in our gardens. How about it, Mr. Brown?

FARMER BROWN:

I'll say I'm busy. If it hadn't been for Mary, I wouldn't be here today, but I do hate to miss any of the meetings.

CHAIRMAN: (Raps for order) (Noise and background conversation)

All right now, let's get our meeting started. You folks back there near the door please come forward and fill up these front seats, and don't scatter all over the room. Mr. Waldo, won't you take a chair right up here at the table? - - - That's good, now let's go. Our announcer has told you that we are going to talk about Growing Small Fruits for Home Use. That's a big subject, and we can only touch upon some of the high points. Ladies and gentlemen, we are fortunate in having Mr. George F. Waldo of the Fruit Production Section of the United States Department of Agriculture, with us today.

FARMER BROWN:

Yes, we're glad to have you with us today, Mr. Waldo, and we're going to ask you a lot of questions.

MR. WALDO:

I am glad to meet all of you and glad to attend your meeting today. I believe that certain of the small fruits should be more universally grown for home use. Take strawberries, for example, they can be grown in nearly every nook and corner of the United States.

(Over)

FARMER BROWN:

Strawberries are my favorite of the small fruits, but I am also very fond of raspberries and blackberries. Before I forget it, I want to ask Mr. Waldo when is the best time to set out strawberry plants?

MR. WALDO:

It depends on where you're located. In the more northern sections of the country, it is generally desirable to set the plants pretty early in the spring, and grow them a whole year before they produce a crop. In the middle or more temperate sections, the plants can often be set as late as July or August. In the extreme South, you can plant strawberries as late as October, and get a crop during the late winter and early spring.

MRS. BROWN:

I would like to ask Mr. Waldo where strawberries originally came from? Of what country are they native?

MR. WALDO:

The original parents of our common strawberries are American, both North and South America. More than two hundred years ago explorers brought the native wild strawberries from Chile, and these were taken to Europe where in the course of time they were crossed with the wild strawberries from North America - perhaps from Virginia. Our varieties have been developed from those.

FARMER BROWN:

I'd like to ask Mr. Waldo if he thinks it pays to plant a new strawberry bed every year?

MR. WALDO:

In Florida, it is best to plant every year. North of Florida, it is customary to renovate the beds and carry them over for the second year. In the northern part of the country, the beds are sometimes kept until the third year.

CHAIRMAN:

I have found that the plants often get too thick, and the old beds become so weedy that it doesn't pay to carry them over. In some sections, clover is one of the most troublesome weeds in the strawberry beds.

AUNT POLLY:

That's the first time I ever heard clover called a weed.

CHAIRMAN:

It is a weed, Aunt Polly, when it gets started in the strawberry bed, and a very troublesome weed at that. Clover and weeds sometimes get such a start in strawberry beds that it pays to plow the patch under and start a new one on clean land.

BETTY BROWN:

I like strawberries, but I don't like to get out in the hot sun and pick them.

CHAIRMAN:

Well Betty, you should get up early in the morning and pick the strawberries just as soon as the dew is off, and before the sun gets so hot, or you can pick them late in the evening, and keep the berries over night in a cool place.

FARMER BROWN:

Mr. Waldo, are there any special points to be observed in the planting and growing of strawberries for home use?

MR. WALDO:

Yes, there are several points to be observed. First, you should plant strawberries on land that is reasonably free from weeds, and on a soil that is well supplied with humus, so it will not dry out. Second, you can get a longer fruiting season by the proper selection of varieties, including early, medium, and late sorts in your planting. Third, it will pay you to plant a new bed every three years.

FARMER BROWN:

How about insects that trouble strawberries,

MR. WALDO:

The white grub is one of the most troublesome, and for that reason strawberries should not be planted on land where a sod has been turned under within a year past.

MRS. BROWN:

Should the runners be kept cut off the strawberry plants?

MR. WALDO:

Well, Mrs. Brown, that depends upon the method of cultivation. If you are growing your berries by the hill system, keep all the runners cut off, except those you wish to leave to make new plants. If you are growing them by the matted-row system, and that is the common practice throughout most of the eastern States, you allow a reasonable number of runners to remain to form new plants, but you don't want to let your strawberries get too thick.

CHAIRMAN:

I think we have given all the time we can spare to strawberries, and suppose we take up some of the other small fruits, raspberries, for instance. Mr. Brown, I believe you grow a few raspberries, do you not?

FARMER BROWN:

Yes, I do, and I am very fond of nice ripe raspberries. I have a row of the Ranere or St. Regis red raspberry in my garden, also a row of Latham. In addition, I have a row of the old Cumberland black raspberry, and a few hills of Farmer, sometimes called Plum Farmer, for early fruiting. I presume Mr. Waldo will tell you that the varieties of raspberries to plant will depend mainly on where you are located.

MR. WALDO:

Yes, that's right, in fact, we don't recommend planting raspberries in the South, especially in the region bordering on the Gulf of Mexico. The new red variety known as Van Fleet will probably give fair results further south than any other variety. When you get up into northern Michigan, and along the Canadian border westward to the Dakotas, most varieties of raspberries winterkill, unless they are protected during the winter by covering them with soil. The Latham is one of the varieties that seems to do well far to the north, and also well to the south. It originated in Minnesota.

MRS. BROWN:

I would like to ask Mr. Waldo why it is that so many raspberry plants die along about the end of the first season after they are planted?

MR. WALDO:

That, Mrs. Brown, is probably due to the presence of diseases, but the plants often die for want of moisture. Raspberries are subject to several diseases, especially the "virus" or "mosaic" diseases, crown-gall and anthracnose, also cane blight and leaf spot diseases are serious in the South. I should say that the control of diseases is the most important factor in raspberry growing. The big problem is to get plants that are free from these diseases.

AUNT POLLY:

Can't you control various diseases by spraying, Mr. Waldo?

MR. WALDO:

Yes, Aunt Polly, to some extent. Spraying the canes with lime sulphur and Bordeaux mixture will help control the anthracnose, but crown-gall works on the roots and you cannot control it by spraying. The main point is to get plants that are reasonably clean, then plant them on clean land.

BETTY BROWN:

I like dewberries. They are so easy to pick, and when they get dead ripe on the vines - - - yum, yum, aren't they good?

MR. WALDO:

Yes, Betty, dewberries are good, and they are one of the best of our small fruits, especially for the South.

MRS. BROWN:

Is the dewberry an American plant?

MR. WALDO:

Yes, Mrs. Brown, the cultivated dewberry is a native of America, and all varieties are of American origin. It is remarkable but the Lucretia variety, the first to be introduced, is still the most popular. It was found in West Virginia soon after the Civil War, and while about 25 other varieties have been introduced, the Lucretia still retains its popularity, except perhaps in parts of the South, where the new Young dewberry, which was originated in 1905 by Mr. B. M. Young of southern Louisiana, has become very popular.

FARMER BROWN:

Are there any special precautions to be observed in growing dewberries?

MR. WALDO:

No, dewberries are grown just about the same as blackberries, except that the vines are trailing and need support. In fact, the dewberry is really a trailing blackberry.

CHAIRMAN:

How about diseases?

MR. WALDO:

There are only two diseases of dewberries that give much trouble. These are anthracnose and double-blossom. Of course, there are other diseases which may cause considerable trouble such as leaf-spot, root-rot, and the cane rust, but anthracnose and double-blossom are the most important.

FARMER BROWN:

How's the best way to control these diseases, or can they be controlled?

MR. WALDO:

In most sections of the South, anthracnose and double-blossom are controlled by cutting off all of the canes, both old and new, immediately after harvesting the crop of berries. Cut the canes just as low as you can without injuring the crowns, then fertilize heavily and produce a new growth.

CHAIRMAN:

We'll have to hurry along, and we want Mr. Waldo to tell us a little about growing blackberries.

MR. WALDO:

Blackberries are grown very much the same as raspberries. They want good, rich soil, and plenty of moisture, but will not stand to have wet feet. A deep, rich sandy loam soil with a mellow subsoil that will allow the roots to go deeply into the ground is best.

AUNT POLLY:

Just where can blackberries be grown, Mr. Waldo:

MR. WALDO:

The main blackberry section extends from North Carolina and Virginia westward to Central Texas, Oklahoma and southeastern Kansas. There are several important blackberry growing sections outside of this region, and blackberries can be grown for home use over a wide area. Winterkilling of the canes is the main limiting factor.

MRS. BROWN:

Cannot the canes be protected from the cold?

MR. WALDO:

Yes, in some cases, the canes are bent down in the fall of the year like those of raspberries and dewberries, and are covered with 6 or 7 inches of soil for protection.

FARMER BROWN:

How about the varieties of blackberries for home use?

MR. WALDO:

There are a large number of varieties to choose from. For home use it's a good plan to have an early, a medium, and a late variety. Early Harvest, Eldorado, Lawton and McDonald are among the standard sorts. McDonald is often recommended for growing in the South. Your State College or Experiment Station workers can give you the best information on varieties for your section.

BETTY BROWN:

I wish there was a kind of blackberry without thorns.

MR. WALDO:

There is, Betty, but the thornless kinds are not so good as the thorny ones. Thorns and blackberries seem to go together, just like thorns and roses.

CHAIRMAN:

Now folks, we want to discuss currants and gooseberries, but as Mr. Waldo will tell you, they're both in the criminal or undesirable class in many sections.

FARMER BROWN:

Yes, they tell me currants and gooseberries have gotten into serious trouble by giving the white pine trees a deadly disease called white pine blister rust.

MR. WALDO:

Yes, that is right. You see, the white pine blister rust must spend part of its life cycle on the leaves or stems of currants or gooseberries, in order to accomplish its deadly work, so in sections where white pines are important, all of the currant and gooseberry bushes have been condemned to destruction. Seems rather hard, but it is a question of the greatest good for the greatest number.

AUNT POLLY:

That doesn't interfere with planting currants and gooseberries in sections where the quarantine has not been established, does it?

MR. WALDO:

No indeed, but you want to be careful to get clean planting stock of these plants, as they are subject to a number of diseases, besides the white pine blister rust.

MRS. BROWN:

How about blueberries for the home fruit garden, Mr. Waldo?

MR. WALDO:

Blueberries may be all right, Mrs. Brown, in certain sections where the soil is suited for their growth, but blueberries are not so well adapted for growing in home fruit gardens as some of the other small fruits we have talked about today. I wouldn't recommend blueberries for the home garden, except possibly in the natural blueberry regions.

CHAIRMAN:

I would like to ask Mr. Waldo if he thinks it would pay to select the best of the blackberries and dewberries found growing wild and cultivate them in our gardens?

MR. WALDO:

No, there are so many good varieties that you can select from that it doesn't pay to spend time on the wild ones. Better get the best while you are at it.

CHAIRMAN:

Well folks, our time is about up.

FARMER BROWN:

Say, I have been so interested in this discussion that I forgot all about time, and I'm glad that Mary insisted on my coming. Before we close our meeting, I would like to move that we extend Mr. Waldo a rising vote of thanks for the splendid information he has given us.

CHAIRMAN:

Everybody rise and give Mr. Waldo a hand. (Applause)

In closing the meeting, I want to remind you that you can secure bulletins on the culture of the various small fruits that we have mentioned today by writing to the United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., or from your county agricultural agent.

The meeting will now stand adjourned until the final Tuesday in April.

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ANNOUNCER:

That brings to a close the meeting of the Progressive Garden Club for today. You can become a member of the Club by sending your request in care of the station to which you are listening.

Those taking part in today's program were Mr. W. R. Beattie, as Chairman, Mr. Frank L. Teuton, as Farmer Brown, Miss Norma L. Hughes, as Mrs. Brown, Miss Patricia Beattie, as Betty Brown, Miss Rose Glaspey, as Aunt Polly, and Mr. George F. Waldo, of the Bureau of Plant Industry, as guest speaker.

the first time, and I have been told that it is a very good one. It is a large, well-constructed house, with a spacious hall, a large dining room, a library, a drawing room, and several bedrooms. The kitchen is large and well-appointed, and there is a separate scullery. The house is situated in a beautiful garden, with a lawn, flower beds, and trees. The garden is well-kept and looks very nice. The house is in excellent condition, and I am sure it will be a comfortable home for you. I hope you will like it.